
Health Care & Wellness Committee

SSB 5369

Brief Description: Regarding counseling professions subject to the authority of the secretary of health.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Becker, Fairley, Keiser, Marr, Murray, Kohl-Welles and Parlette; by request of Department of Health).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Adds certain counseling-related professions to the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

Hearing Date: 3/19/09

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191)

Background:

In 2008 legislation was passed dealing with the practice of counseling. The legislation eliminated the credential of Registered Counselor as of July 1, 2010, and created eight new credentials:

- Agency Affiliated Counselors (authorized to provide counseling services on behalf of a state agency);
- Certified Advisors (authorized to engage in private practice counseling);
- Certified Counselors (authorized to engage in private practice counseling); and
- the following associate and trainee credentials for persons who are working toward achieving educational and/or experiential requirements for full credentialing:
 - Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Associate;
 - Licensed Mental Health Counselor Associate;
 - Licensed Social Work Associate – Advanced;
 - Licensed Social Work Associate – Independent Clinical; and
 - Chemical Dependency Professional Trainee.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The 2008 legislation did not, however, update the section of the Uniform Disciplinary Act that lists the professions over which the Secretary of Health has disciplinary authority.

Summary of Bill:

The following professions are added to the section of the Uniform Disciplinary Act that lists the professions over which the Secretary of Health has disciplinary authority:

- Agency Affiliated Counselors;
- Certified Advisors;
- Certified Counselors;
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Associate;
- Licensed Mental Health Counselor Associate;
- Licensed Social Work Associate – Advanced;
- Licensed Social Work Associate – Independent Clinical; and
- Chemical Dependency Professional Trainee

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Section 1, which adds all eight professions plus registered counselors to the Uniform Disciplinary Act, contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2009. Section 2, which does not include registered counselors, takes effect on July 1, 2010.